DOCUMENT RESUME

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TITLE	How Can Tests Be Unfair? Description of Teacher Inservice Education Materials.
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ABSTRACT

An inservice teacher education program--designed to make those administering tests more aware of the difficulties students face in a testing due to discriminatory factors inherent in evaluation instruments--is described, and information is provided on program purposes, content, activities, resources, ordering information, and history of development. Participants in the program work on simulated test activities and then evaluate the results. Specific topics discussed include perception and muscle control problems, language problems, conceptualization problems, and cultural difference problems. (DS)

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DESCRIPTION OF TEACHER INSERVICE EDUCATION MATERIALS

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title: HOW CAN TESTS BE UNFAIR?

Publication Date(s): February, 1975

Intended Users: The program is intended for preservice and inservice teachers, education administrators and special educators involved directly or indirectly in testing students.

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Grade Level(s): Elementary, middle, secondary school

Number: Group

Primary Focus: The product is designed to make those administering tests more aware of the difficulties students face in a testing situation due to discriminatory factors inherent in evaluation instruments.

School subject(s) and/or inservice topic(s) covered:

The inservice topic covered in this program is student evaluation. Specifically discussed are visual perception problems, auditory discrimination problems, muscle control problems; language problems; conceptualization problems; cultural difference problems and how they interfere with an accurate measurement of achievement on tests. The simulated test samples give items normally present on intelligence tests.

What participant does in using the materials:

After an overview by the teacher leader, the participant reads pages 1-11 in the booklet, How Can Tests Be Unfair? The group members (a number of 18 is suggested by the developer) are divided into six groups of three. Each group works on a simulated test activity. After completing the test activities, which include discussion questions, the participants give presentations of their experiences. Participants then answer questions from the booklet. Answers are shared; areas of test bias are identified; and an evaluation of the workshop is made.

Resources:

The only role description for the program facilitator mentioned by the developer is that he or she be familiar with all the contents of the workshop. A room large enough to hold 18 people as a group and as six smaller groups is needed. Also, the developer lists the following essential equipment: cassette recorder, stopwatch, blackboard or large tablet, and chalk or markers. The developer suggests that 90 minutes is minimum time needed to complete the program.

Describer critique:

This product is extremely methodical and structured, but does allow the participant to become sensitized and forces him/her to think about a very real problem: inherent bias in testing. The developer does not try to force any theories upon the participant, nor does she attempt to give solutions to the problems. The participant is made aware of the problem by experiencing similar situations, and then is asked to formulate possible solutions on his or her own.

SP 013 717

ASG27 (SE) diagnosis - tests and measurements - evaluation of student achievement TD

1.0 PURPOSES:

Rationale

The developer states in the overview that the product is designed "to increase sensitivity to possible discriminatory factors inherent in assessment instruments and practices."

Goals

The developers' intention is that all participants are enabled to "identify a minimum of six possible sources of test bias."

Objectives

The objective of the product is that participants will generate some ideas on how to prevent children from being tested "by unfair materials and practices in the following areas:

a. test administration
b. test selection and construction
c. use of test results
d. policy decisions."

2.0 CONTENT — Scope and Sequencing of Topics:

Scope

The following items are contained in the product package:

Overview
Directions to The Workshop Leader
Masters for Six Simulated Test Activities
1. A Visual Perceptual Problem
2. An Auditory Discrimination Problem (accompanied by cassette tape)
3. A Muscle Control Problem
4. A Language Problem
5. A Conceptualization Problem
6. A Cultural Difference Problem

Directions for the Summary Presentations
Evaluation Forms
Summary Evaluation Sheet
Booklet - How Can Tests Be Unfair? (20 copies provided in kit)

Sequence

The developer suggests a specific sequence for the workshop as well as time schedules for all activities (see 3.1).

3.0 ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES INVOLVED IN USE OF PRODUCT

3.1 Description of main inservice activities:

The developer suggests that this material be studied in a 90-minute program. The first activity for the participant after an overview and introduction by the instructor is reading the booklet, pages 1-11, How Can Tests Be Unfair? Then the group of 18 is divided into six groups of three. Each group is given a test simulation exercise. The groups spend approximately 30 minutes on the exercise. The participants reconvene to answer questions in the booklet, then each of the six simulation groups makes a 20 minute presentation. The remaining 20 minutes is devoted to follow-up activities including sharing of answers, identifying areas of test bias and completing evaluation forms.

3.2 Help given in use of product:

The overview gives the instructor very explicit instructions on how to conduct the workshop. This includes a schedule with time allotments for activities and materials and equipment needs. There are also suggestions for adapting the program to accommodate more or fewer participants and for lengthening the time allowed for the course. There seem to be no particular qualifications for the "workshop leader." All that is specified by the developer is that the leader believe in active participation; be flexible; believe in the workshop content; and be totally familiar with all the content in the program before presenting it.

4.0 EVALUATION OF TEACHER INSERVICE LEARNING

No formal assessments are provided with the product. Participants are asked to answer questions which are basically personal intent inquiries.

5.0 ORDERING INFORMATION

5.1 Resources required/recommended for implementing product:

The suggested amount of time for the program is 90 minutes. Equipment needs indicated by the developer are: a cassette tape recorder/player, a stopwatch, a blackboard or large tablet, chalk or marker. A room large enough to allow participants to assemble and to break into small groups is needed.

5.2 Distributor name/address:

The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

(703) 620-3660

5.3 Components/approximate costs:

Component	Purchase	Rental	No. Req.	Reusable
HOW CAN TESTS BE UNFAIR? Kit includes a copy of all components (see 2.0) and 20 copies of the booklet, How Can Tests Be Unfair?	$35.00	no	1 kit	yes

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6.0 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Identification of the developer:

The product was developed by Jean N. Nazzaro, an educational specialist for the Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, Virginia.

6.2 How developed and when:

The Council for Exceptional Children was approached by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education to develop material on testing as a result of the enactment of Bill 93880. The kit was developed in 1975.

6.3 Evidence of effectiveness with users:

Although the data are incomplete on the field testing conducted to evaluate the program's effectiveness, Ms. Nazzaro reports that all responses from participants to date has been positive.

DESCRIBER CRITIQUE

Appropriateness / adaptability / technical quality:

Taking the tests designed to simulate problems children may face in a testing situation can prove to be very frustrating for the participant. This is the intent of the developer and it is successful for demonstration purposes. Particularly troublesome was the visual perception simulation, which thoroughly convinced the describer that measures should be taken by teachers to erase the discriminatory characteristics of tests. This product is appropriate for all those involved in the education of children. All the material, including the cassette tape on auditory discrimination, is of professional quality. The print material is clear and well written. The tape is especially clear, as the participant is asked to discriminate unfamiliar sounds.

Content accuracy/social fairness/community acceptance issues:

The validity of test results is constantly being questioned and this product, through simulation and observation, illustrates why educators must carefully analyze testing procedures and results. The product attempts to give examples of varying types of perception, expression and conceptualization problems including differences in cultural lifestyles and language.

Overall summary/comment:

This workshop does not give answers to testing problems and does not profess to do so. It does sensitize the participants so that, hopefully, they can generate some ideas on how to correct some of the discrimination involved with testing. The approach is not dogmatic, but it is methodical and well organized. It does not try to force any theories upon its participants. The organization, methodology and flexibility of this product provide a positive learning experience where participants are allowed to think and the expression of their thoughts is encouraged.

CD-8/77